



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPI 2005-112

Thursday, August 25, 2005

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Six Milwaukee schools receive grants to improve student attendance

Grants renewed for Vincent and Bradley Tech high schools, new awards to four other MPS schools

MADISON—State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster announced new federal funding for four Milwaukee schools to help them reduce truancy and improve students' daily attendance.

The schools—Custer and Pulaski high schools and Kosciuszko and Muir middle schools—will share \$250,000 in funding to build partnerships and conduct activities to improve student attendance.

"While there may be disagreements between groups and individuals over specific educational policies, we can all agree that we must do everything we can to ensure that our students stay in school," Burmaster said. "We forged the Alliance for Attendance last year—a broad coalition of community leaders; educators; students; parents; and members of the business, faith, and not-for-profit communities—to work together to keep our children engaged in their learning and attending school daily. Those efforts are making a difference and must continue during the 2005-06 school year."

In addition to the new funding, Burmaster announced that Bradley Technology and Trade and Vincent high schools will share \$125,000 renewal grants to continue their efforts to work with the community to keep students in school and improve daily attendance.

The funding comes from the federal Title I Supplemental Grant Program, part of the reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001. Funding for Title I schools is based on progress on the four annual measurable objectives used to determine adequate yearly progress under Wisconsin's plan to meet accountability requirements of federal education laws. The objectives are test participation, graduation and attendance criteria, and achievement levels in reading and mathematics. These grants specifically help schools address attendance issues.

"Throughout the 2003-04 school year, I held meetings with students, parents, educators, and other community leaders to learn more about what we can do to decrease truancy," Burmaster said. "We took those lessons and applied them to do more to spark student enthusiasm for learning and understanding of the importance of staying in school. We know we need to continue these efforts on behalf of our students. Their future and ours depend on it."

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